

MEMORANDUM FOR:

29 March 1951

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SUBJECT: Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the CIA Transliteration Committee

1. The fourth meeting of the CIA Transliteration Committee was held at 1500, 26 March 1951 in Room 2219 "M" Building.

2. After a brief review of the decisions of the previous meeting, the subject of approval of the recommendations of the Working Committee on Non-ideographic Far Eastern languages was presented. This covered recommended transliteration systems for Annamese, Siamese and Burmese. No discussion developed. A vote was taken and the recommendations approved unanimously.

3. The subject of approval of the recommendations of the Working Committee on Near Eastern languages was then opened for discussion. [] raised several points in regard to the recommended system for the transliteration of Greek. In most of these cases the Working Committee had left alternatives. As it is the desire of the representatives on the Committee that one form be used consistently, rather than leaving alternatives, selections were made by the Committee in each of these cases and the transliteration of upsilon was changed from u to y. Selections in the other cases were as follows: the letter f for the Greek "phi", the letter h for the Greek "chi", and letters av, ev and iv for the corresponding Greek diphthongs "alpha upsilon, epsilon upsilon and eta upsilon."

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4. [] then indicated that [] ORR, had obtained comments from the Board of Geographic Names on the recommendations under consideration. He noted that the Board recommended that "CIA might be well advised to submit the tables to scientific linguists, such as those at the Foreign Service Institute, for intensive study and criticism before final adoption." In reply the Chairman noted that these systems had been for some 18 months under consideration by linguists, including representatives from the State Department and the Services, and, in addition, consultations had been held with appropriate members on the Board of Geographic Names by the Working Committee prior to their recommendations. [] then recommended that in the vote to be taken on the recommendations, provision be made so that final approval would be subject to review by committee representatives of the comments of the Board of Geographic Names. No further discussion developed. A vote was then taken on approval of recommended transliteration systems for Arabic, Persian, Armenian, Hebrew, Urdu and Hindi as presented by the Working Committee and for Greek as amended by the Committee, such approval to be subject to review by the members on the comments of the Board of Geographic Names on these systems. This was adopted unanimously.

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The Chairman indicated that he would have copies of the BGN memorandum made and forwarded to each committee representative. He also requested that any comments by committee representatives concerning the BGN paper be made by 6 April 1951.

5. Finally, the proposal of [] on the use of ae, oe and ue transliteration for the corresponding umlauts in German was opened for discussion. No discussion developed. A vote was taken and this proposal adopted unanimously.

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6. As no new business for the Committee developed, the fourth meeting was adjourned sine die at 1545, 26 March 1951.

s/
J. J. BAGNALL
Chairman
CIA Transliteration Committee